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**Washington, DC** - Representatives Betty McCollum (MN-04), Frank Pallone (NJ-06), Adam Schiff (CA-29), and Tim Walz (MN-01) spearheaded a letter to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, urging action to ensure the well-being of Iraqi Armenian Christian refugees in Jordan and Syria. The [letter](#), which 16 other Members of Congress have signed, urgently requests U.S. assistance to help resettle Iraqi Armenian Christian refugees to Armenia. Additional resources from the United States will allow Armenia to reach more Iraqi Armenian Christians with essential resources as well as the opportunity to begin a new life in a safe and secure environment.

According to a recent press release from the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Iraqi refugees, both inside and outside of the country, are facing deteriorating conditions while international concern is slowly declining. The attacks on Iraqi Christian refugees, in particular, are a constant source of insecurity. UNHCR works to protect and relocate refugees, while helping them restart their lives in safer areas. Two years ago, UNHCR-Armenia helped several large groups of refugees resettle in Armenia.

The Armenian government already made a generous commitment to UNHCR. This includes the offer of all Iraqi Armenian refugees the opportunity for citizenship, participation in UNHCR's Iraqi resettlement program, and resources to help refugees rebuild their lives. Armenia has effectively delivered on these commitments over the past two years.

"It is in the interest of the U.S. that Iraqi Armenian Christian refugees be provided the opportunity to start a new life in safety and peace," said Representative McCollum, who traveled to Syria and met with Iraqi refugees in 2006. "The Armenian government's offer to receive refugees is very generous, and I believe the U.S. should provide the humanitarian support necessary to ensure their successful relocation and integration into Armenian society."

"Life for these refugees is difficult and the assistance provided by UNHCR provides relief that is critical to these families," said Congressman Frank Pallone, Jr. (NJ-06). "With the commitment of the government of Armenia and the success that past funds have yielded in settling refugees in Armenia it is important for us to continue and increase the funds being allocated to Armenia. I urge our continued financial support and continued involvement in this pursuit."

"Conditions for Iraqi Armenian Christian refugees are becoming increasingly desperate at the same time that international support for the vulnerable population is dwindling," said Rep. Adam Schiff (D-CA). "We urge the Obama Administration to commit additional funds to UNHCR to sustain the momentum we have built to help these refugees resettle and rebuild their lives in Armenia, providing a cost-effective and regional solution for families who might otherwise seek resettlement within our borders."

